

Message Text

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16

ACTION INR-07

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FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA

TO AMEMBASSY ATHENS

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 4803

C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 6872

E.O. 11652: XGDS 3

TAGS: PINR TU GR

SUBJECT: BIO INFO ON NEW TURKISH AMBASSADOR TO GREECE,
NECDET TEZEL

1. TURKEY'S NEW AMBASSADOR TO GREECE, NECDET TEZEL,
IS EXPECTED TO DEPART FOR ATHENS IN MID-SEPT. BIO INFO FOLLOWS:

A. AMB TEZEL WAS BORN IN BURDUR, TURKEY, IN 1926, AND IS A GRADUATE OF THE GALATASARAY LYCEE IN ISTANBUL AND THE ISTANBUL FACULTY OF LAW. HE JOINED THE MFA IN 1950. AFTER TIME OUT FOR MILITARY SERVICE FROM 1951 TO 1952, HE WAS ASSIGNED TO TEL AVIV IN 1953, THEN MOVED TO PRAGUE IN 1956. IN 1957, HE RETURNED TO ANKARA AS FIRST SECTY IN THE CONSULAR DEPT. IN 1959 HE WAS TRANSFERRED TO POLICY PLANNING, BECOMING HEAD OF SECTION IN 1960. LATER THAT SAME YEAR TEZEL WAS APPOINTED TURKISH PERMANENT DELEGATE TO THE EUROPEAN OFFICE OF THE UN IN GENEVA. IN 1964 HE BECAME A SECTION CHIEF IN THE ECON DEPT OF THE MFA; IN 1966 HE BECAME ASST DIRGEN OF THAT DEPT. HE THEN SPENT FIVE YEARS AS DCM IN WASH. RETURNING TO ANKARA IN 1971, HE HELD A SERIES OF INCREASINGLY SENIOR JOBS: ASST DIRGEN FOR POLICY PLANNING, HEAD OF THE EASTERN DEPT, AND, STARTING IN SUMMER 1974, DIRGEN FOR POLAFF (FOR PRACTICAL PURPOSES THE NO. 3 SPOT IN THE MFA). IN A PROSPECTIVE MFA REORGANIZATION, HE IS BEING REPLACED BY FOUR OFFICERS.

B. TEZEL IS A VERY HARDNOSED AND STUBBORN NEGOTIATOR, DIFFICULT TO DEAL WITH, WHO WAITS TILL THE LAST MINUTE TO COM-
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PROMISE. HE IS NEVERTHELESS LIKABLE PERSON. HE IS VERY

PROFESSIONAL AND VERY BRIGHT. HE IS SLIGHTLY RESERVED, BUT NOTABLY CAPABLE DIPLOMAT WHO LIKES AMERICAN OFFICIALS AND HAS HAD EXCELLENT PERSONAL RELATIONS WITH EMBOFFS INCLUDING WITH THE AMBASSADOR. NONETHELESS, THERE IS SOME EVIDENCE THAT IN THE WAKE OF THE CONGRESSIONAL ARMS EMBARGO, TEZEL HAS BEEN ONE OF THE ARCHITECTS OF TURKISH REAPPROCHEMENT EFFORTS WITH COMMUNIST COUNTRIES, AND THIS POSSIBILITY SHOULD BE TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION WHEN DEALING WITH HIM.

C. TEZEL IS FLUENT IN ENGLISH AND FRENCH. HIS HEALTH IS POOR. HE HAS BAD TEETH, WEAK EYES, SMOKES TOO MUCH, OVERWORKS, AND RARELY GETS EXERCISE.

D. TEZEL'S WIFE, PHILOMENA (WHOSE NAME IS USUALLY SHORTENED TO THE TURKISH SOUNDING "MENA" HERE BUT MAY BE USED MORE FULLY IN ATHENS) WAS BORN IN IRELAND AND EDUCATED IN THE UK. FOR MANY YEARS THEIR MARRIAGE WAS NOT RECOGNIZED BY THE MFA, WHICH DOES NOT SANCTION THE MARRIAGE OF TURKISH DIPLOMATS WITH FOREIGNERS. HOWEVER, LAST YEAR SHE WAS NATURALIZED AS A TURK AND CONSEQUENTLY GAINED OFFICIAL STATUS IN MFA EYES AS MRS. TEZEL. SHE IS SOFTSPOKEN, TALL AND ATTRACTIVE, APPARENTLY SOME YEARS YOUNGER THAN HER HUSBAND, AND HAS BEEN WORKING AS PRIVATE SECRETARY TO CENTO SYG BAYULKEN. THEY HAVE NO CHILDREN.

E. AMBASSADOR HAS FOUND TEZEL TO BE VALUABLE AND GENERALLY ACCURATE PREDICTOR OF SUBSEQUENT GOT REACTIONS TO CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS. FOR THIS REASON, EMB ATHENS MAY FIND HIM A USEFUL OFFICIAL WITH WHOM TO KEEP IN CONTACT.
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